

U. S. Office of Government Ethics

Field Office Ethics Program Survey

INTRODUCTION

To better serve the ethics community of executive branch departments and agencies (agency) and its field office ethics programs throughout the country, the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) would like to learn more about your experiences, opinions, and needs regarding various facets of your field office's ethics program. The results of this survey will be used to improve the services provided by OGE in support of field office ethics programs.

This survey is being distributed to the primary ethics official at field office ethics program locations throughout the country. We ask that you, as the primary ethics official, complete the survey. However, if administration of the ethics program is delegated to another person in your office, please forward the survey to that person for completion. Administration includes reviewing financial disclosure reports, providing ethics advice, and/or conducting ethics training. The survey takes about 20 minutes to complete.

Please provide responses to the survey questions based on your experiences at the field office in which you work. For the purposes of this survey, "field office" is the regional, district, or other level office for which you administer the ethics program for your agency. For example, if you administer the program for the entire region (whether or not the region has sublocations) your answers should pertain to the entire region. However, if you administer the program for a designation other than a region, for example, a district office, your answers should pertain to the district office only.

This survey is anonymous. There is nothing on it to identify you. Please mail back your completed survey in the enclosed addressed envelope by June 5, 1998. Also, please return the enclosed postcard separately after completing the survey. We need the cards returned so that we can remind those who do not answer. There is no way to link the number on the postcard with your returned survey. A prompt response will save the expense of costly follow-up mailings.

In the event that the return envelope is misplaced, the return address is:

Attention: Phyllis A. Hoffer U.S. Office of Government Ethics 1201 New York Avenue, NW. Washington, DC 20005

Important Note: This survey is intended for completion by Federal employees only.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

 How many years of experience have you had in administering an executive branch agency ethics program? Administering the program includes collecting and reviewing financial disclosure reports, providing ethics-related advice and counseling, and/or conducting ethics training. (Check one.)

1. More than 3 years (continue)
 2. 1 to 3 years (continue)
 3. Less than 1 year (continue)
 4. No experience (Stop. If you have no experience, please mail the survey back to OGE in the enclosed return envelope. Mail the

postcard separately. Thank you for your cooperation.)

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

The next few questions ask about where your ethics program is organizationally located within the structure of your field office.

2.	In which of the following operational units in your field office is administration of the ethics program organizationally located? (Check one.)
	 Legal office Ethics office Regional/field director's office Personnel office Other (specify)
3.	Do you believe that administration of the ethics program is organizationally located in the best place to carry out the program's responsibilities? (Check one.)
	 Yes (go to question 6) Probably yes (go to question 6) Uncertain (go to question 6) Probably no (continue) No (continue)
4.	If you indicated in the previous question that you believe the ethics program is probably not or not organizationally located in the best place to carry out the program's responsibilities, which operational unit do you think would be best? (Check one.)
	 Legal office Ethics office Regional/field director's office Personnel office Other (specify)
5.	Please provide the reasons why you think the program could be best administered in the operational unit you specified in question 4. (Check all that apply.)
	 More staff to administer the program Staff is more qualified to administer the program Staff has a closer relationship to people seeking ethics advice Better computer capability Higher organizational visibility/power Other (specify)

The next several questions ask about which job disciplines administer the ethics program in your field office.

6.	Which of the following job disciplines in your field office is primarily responsible for administration of your office's ethics program? (Check one.)
	 1. □ Attorney 2. □ Management analyst 3. □ Personnel specialist 4. □ Paralegal 5. □ Other (specify)
7.	Which of the following job disciplines in your field office, if any, assist in the administration of your office's ethics program? (Check all that apply.)
	 1. □ Attorney 2. □ Management analyst 3. □ Personnel specialist 4. □ Paralegal 5. □ Other (specify)
8.	In your opinion, is the job discipline you identified as being the one primarily responsible in question 6 also the most appropriate job discipline to administer the ethics program in your office?(Check one.)
	 Yes (go to question 11) Probably yes (go to question 11) Uncertain (go to question 11) Probably no (continue) No (continue)
9.	If you indicated in the previous question that you believe the ethics program is probably not or not administered by the most appropriate job discipline, which do you think would be best? (Check one.)
	 1. □ Attorney 2. □ Management analyst 3. □ Personnel specialist 4. □ Paralegal 5. □ Other (specify)
10.	Please provide the reasons why you think the ethics program could be best administered by the job discipline you identified in question 9. (Check all that apply.)
	 □ Issues are complex and require a high level of knowledge of ethics laws and regulations. □ Extensive knowledge of ethics laws/regulations is not required for most program aspects. □ Much of the work is administrative; hence, the need for legal opinions is limited. □ A major portion of the work is closely aligned with the personnel function. □ Personnel has better control of who needs to file financial disclosure reports and when. □ Other(specify)

For the next questions, think about your office's ethics program workload and staffing levels.

11.	In 1997, what was the approximate workload in your field office in each of the following ethics program elements? (Provide the estimated number of reports or employees, as appropriate, next to each program element. If you had no activity in any particular element, enter 0.)
	Public financial disclosure reports (SF 278) collected/reviewed
	2. Confidential financial disclosure reports (OGE 450) collected/reviewed
	New employees provided initial ethics orientation
	4. Employees provided annual verbal ethics briefing (SF 278 filers)
	5. Employees provided annual verbal or written briefing (non-SF278 filers)
	6. Employees provided advice and counseling (verbal/written)
12.	How many employees in your field office, including yourself, work on the ethics program and approximately how much of their time do they spend on it? (Provide the number of employees next to the percentage of time they spend working on the ethics program. For example, 2 employees spend 80% or more of their time and 1 employee spends less than 5% of his/her time working on ethics program issues.)
	1. 80% or more
	2. 79% to 50%
	3. 49% to 20%
	4. 19% to 5%
	5. less than 5%
13.	In your opinion, is the staffing level (number of ethics staff and amount of time spent on the program given the workload) adequate to effectively administer your office's ethics program? (Check one.)
	 1. Yes 2. Probably yes 3. Uncertain 4. Probably no 5. No
14.	In your opinion, has the ethics program staff in your field office, including yourself, received adequate ethics-related training to effectively administer your office's program? (Check one.)
	Yes Probably yes Uncertain Probably no No

ETHICS PROGRAM OPERATIONS

For the next questions we would like to obtain your views on the operation of your field office's ethics program over the last year. For example, we would like to know if your office had or did not have significant difficulty collecting financial disclosure reports from those employees who were required to file, reviewing financial disclosure reports within the required time frame, getting employees to show up for required annual ethics briefings, and communicating with your agency's Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO).

		Problems	Resolve	Still Exi	to Judge	
	c financial disclosure report collecti c financial disclosure report review					
3. Confid	dential disclosure report collection					
5. New 6 6. New 6 7. Annua 8. Annua 9. Annua	dential disclosure report review employee identification employee initial ethics orientation al verbal briefing SF 278 filers al verbal briefing non-SF 278 filers al written briefing non-SF 278 filers byee attendance at ethics briefings	s 🗆				
12. Insuffi13. Comm14. Ethics15. Materi	icient number of ethics staff icient experience of ethics staff nunications with the DAEO training for ethics officials ials/methods for conducting training advice and counseling (specify)					

16. For the ethics program elements or functions which you indicated have significant problems that still exist, briefly tell us what are the specific problems and for which elements or functions. (Specify.)

BUDGET

Many agencies have recently experienced budget reductions. The ethics program, among others, may have been affected by these reductions. We would like your opinion on the effect any reductions have had on your office's ethics program.

17.	To what extent, if at all, have budget reductions at your office or agency negatively affected your office's ethics program in the past year? (Check one.)
	 Don't know (go to question 20) No budget reductions (go to question 20) To little or no extent (go to question 20) To some extent (continue) To a moderate extent (continue) To a great extent (continue) To a very great extent (continue)
18.	What aspects of your office's ethics program have been negatively affected because of budget reductions? (Check all that apply.)
	 Collecting and/or reviewing public financial disclosure reports Collecting and/or reviewing confidential financial disclosure reports Providing ethics advice and counseling Providing initial ethics orientation Conducting annual verbal ethics briefings for SF 278 filers Conducting verbal ethics briefings for non-SF 278 filers Distributing written ethics briefings for non-SF 278 filers Distributing for ethics officials Other (specify)
19.	What steps, if any, have you taken or do you plan to take to cope with the effects of the budget cuts on your office's ethics program? (Specify)
PRO	GRAM SUPPORT
	next questions ask your opinion about your satisfaction with the level of support for thics program provided by management at your field office and your agency.
20.	Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of support the ethics program receives from management at your field office ? For example, are the resources provided sufficient, does the program have a high visibility, etc. (Check one.)
	 Very Satisfied Satisfied As satisfied as dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied No basis to judge

7.

I am management

21.	In your opinion, what kinds of additional support does the ethics program need from management at your field office? (Check all that apply.)
	 Human resources Monetary resources Ethics training for ethics officials Improved dissemination of ethics information/materials Higher visibility of ethics program No additional support Other (specify)
22.	Now think about support for your program from your agency headquarters . Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of support received from management at your agency headquarters (including the DAEO) in administering your office's ethics program? For example, are resources designated by headquarters sufficient, does the program have a high visibility, is ethics information communicated in a timely manner, etc? (Check one.)
	 Very Satisfied Satisfied As satisfied as dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied No basis to judge
23.	In your opinion, what kinds of additional support, if any, are needed from management at your agency headquarters to help you more effectively administer your office's ethics program? (Check all that apply.)
	 Human resources Monetary resources Ethics training for ethics officials Improved dissemination of ethics information/materials Higher visibility of ethics program No additional support Other (specify)
ETHI	CS PROGRAM EVALUATION
	e next few questions think about any reviews that have been conducted to evaluate beration of your field office's ethics program.
24.	By what methods, if any, has your field office's ethics program been evaluated or monitored to determine if it is in compliance with executive branch ethics laws and regulations? (Check all that apply.)
	 Field office internal review DAEO internal review Agency Inspector General review OGE annual questionnaire OGE ethics program review Evaluation never performed (go to question 28) Don't know (go to question 28)

8. Other (specify)_____

25.	When was the most recent evaluation of your office's ethics program completed?
	1. □ 1998 2. □ 1997 3. □ 1996 4. □ Prior to 1996 5. □ Don't know
26.	What were the results of the evaluation? (Check one.)
	 The ethics program was in compliance with ethics laws and regulations. The ethics program was generally in compliance except for minor problems. The ethics program was not in compliance in one or more significant program elements. Don't know.
27.	In your opinion, has your office's ethics program improved since the last evaluation?
	1. ☐ Yes 2. ☐ Probably yes 3. ☐ Uncertain 4. ☐ Probably no 5. ☐ No 6. ☐ No basis to judge
TRAIN	NING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
about answe	er to better focus OGE's training development resources, we would like to know more your field office's ethics program training needs. To the extent possible, please er the following questions from the perspective of the ethics staff as a whole. If you at answer from that perspective or if you are the only staff, answer for yourself.
28.	Think back over the last year. Identify the topics on which you have provided ethics advice or made decisions and the extent of the research generally conducted in order to provide the advice or make the decisions. (Check one column for each row. Check "No basis to judge" if a particular topic was not addressed.)
	Little or No Moderate Extensive No Basis Research Research Research To Judge
	1. 18 U.S.C. 202 (special Government employees) 2. 18 U.S.C. 203/205 (representation) 3. 18 U.S.C. 207 (post employment) 4. 18 U.S.C. 208 (conflicting financial interests) 5. 18 U.S.C. 209 (supplementation of salary) 6. Gifts from outside sources
	7. Gifts between employees 8. Impartiality in performance of official duties 9. Seeking other employment 10. Misuse of position, resources, information 11. Outside employment/activities 12. Review of public reports (SF 278) 13. Review of confidential reports (OGE 450) 14. Other (specify)

29.	Which of the following ethics-related available to you? (Check all that apply		ls and in	formation	do you have	e readily	
	 □ OGE SF 278 review guide □ OGE 450 review guide □ Ethics laws - Conflict of Interest □ OGE regulations - Standards of □ OGE DAEOgrams □ OGE Newsgram □ OGE Informal Advisory Letters/I □ OGE training materials (excluding) □ OGE training videotapes □ None of the above 	Ethical C	conduct, T pinions			Exemptions	, etc.
30.	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you th information on each of the following topi (Check one column for each row.)						
	Very Satisfi		isfied U	Indecided	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No basis to judge
	1. 18 U.S.C. 202 (SGE) 2. 18 U.S.C. 203/205 (representation) 3. 18 U.S.C. 207 (post employment) 4. 18 U.S.C. 208 (conflicting fin. int.) 5. 18 U.S.C. 209 (salary supp.) 6. Gifts from outside sources 7. Gifts between employees 8. Impartiality in performance of duties 9. Seeking other employment 10. Misuse of position, resources, info 11. Outside employment/activities 12. Review of public reports 13. Review of confidential reports 14. Other (specify)						
31.	Which of the following sources are y materials and information and which are row.)	•	ary sourc	es? (Check	one column	for each	
	 OGE (other than OGE's Web site) OGE's Web site Your own agency (other than the Web. Your own agency's Web site Other organizations or Web sites Other (specify) 	eb site)	Primary Source	Secondar Source	y Don't use/ NA		

32.	In your opinion, on which topics, if any, do you n all that apply.)	eed training or additional training? (Check
	 1. □ 18 U.S.C. 202 (SGE) 2. □ 18 U.S.C. 203/205 (representation) 3. □ 18 U.S.C. 207 (post employment) 4. □ 18 U.S.C. 208 (conflicting financial intersisted in the second of the second of	ties on ports
ethics		eduling regional ethics training classes for demand is highest. Again, to the extent of the entire ethics staff.
33.	Which of the following ethics-related events, if a (Check all that apply.)	any, would you be interested in attending?
	 Regional ethics training class for ethics of Regional lunchtime speakers' program Satellite broadcast Would not attend (go to question 35) Other (specify) 	ficials —
34.	If you would be interested in attending a two- to of topics, in which one of the following cities wou your office is located is not listed, select the authorized to go for the training. (CHECK ONE	Id you probably attend? If the city in which one city to which you would probably be
	 Albuquerque, NM Anchorage, AK Atlanta, GA Billings, MT Boston, MA Chicago, IL Cleveland, OH Dallas/Fort Worth, TX Denver, CO Indianapolis, IN Kansas City, KS/MO Las Vegas, NV Los Angeles, CA Memphis, TN Miami, FL 	16. ☐ Minneapolis, MN 17. ☐ New Orleans, LA 18. ☐ New York, NY 19. ☐ Oklahoma City, OK 20. ☐ Philadelphia, PA 21. ☐ Phoenix, AZ 22. ☐ Pittsburgh, PA 23. ☐ Portland, OR 24. ☐ Salt Lake City, UT 25. ☐ San Diego, CA 26. ☐ San Francisco, CA 27. ☐ San Juan, PR 28. ☐ Seattle, WA 29. ☐ Washington, DC 30. ☐ Would not attend

We would also like to know whether or not your field office has implemented or plans to implement changes to the way you provide annual ethics briefings and what types of training methods you would like to use for **conducting** ethics training in the future.

35. The 1997 interim rule amendments to OGE's ethics training regulation, among other things, give agencies options as to the method by which they provide annual ethics briefings for covered employees who are **not** public financial disclosure report filers. For those covered employees, annual training may now be provided by means of written briefings for up to two out of every three years or, as previously required, annual verbal briefings may be continued.

We would like to know whether or not your field office has implemented/will implement the change to provide written briefings instead of verbal briefings and, if so, when was it/will it be implemented? (Check one.)

	 In 1997 In 1998 Sometime after 1998 Will not be implemented Don't know if the change will be implemented
36.	What types of training methods would you like OGE to provide for your use for conducting ethics training over the next few years? Select your top 3 choices. (Check up to 3.)
	 Training is not conducted by this office Videotapes (on a variety of ethics-related topics) Audiotapes (on a variety of ethics-related topics) Teleconferencing Satellite broadcast Interactive computer-based training Group discussions/case studies Quizzes Lectures Other (specify)

OGE is developing computer-based ethics training. In order for us to direct our resources most efficiently, we would like to know a few specifics about your office's computer-related capabilities and the level of computer access for employees who are required to receive ethics training.

37.	Which of the following statements best describes your use of OGE's Web site on the Internet? (Check one.) (Stop by for a visit at WWW.USOGE.GOV)
	 I have access to and have used information from OGE's Web site. I have access to but have not used OGE's Web site.
	I have Internet access but I was not aware that there was an OGE Web site.
	 I do not have Internet access.

38.	available to the employees in your field office who are required to receive ethics training and where is access to those capabilities located? (Check one column for each row.)					
	 Computer with a CD-ROM player Computer with audio capability Computer with video capability Computer with Internet access Computer with external E-mail Computer without above capabilities 	At each employee's desk	Shared among several employees	Not available	Don't know	
39.	We would also like to know whether if it is, which version? (Check one	•	omputer operatir	ng system is	Windows and,	
	 1. □ Windows 3.1 2. □ Windows 95 3. □ Other operating system 4. □ Don't know 					
YOU I	HAVE THE LAST WORD					

Thank you for completing this survey. Your opinions and ideas are valuable to us, so we would like to give you another opportunity to express them.

40. What ideas and comments do you have regarding how field offices, agencies, and/or OGE can help improve the administration of field office ethics programs?

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